

VZCZCXRO2667  
PP RUEHTRO  
DE RUEHFR #0362 0630629  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 030629Z MAR 08  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2123  
INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY 1538  
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY 0111  
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 2940

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 000362

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E, AF/RSA/ IO/UNP, EEB/TRA/OTP, OES/OA, L

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/01/2018

TAGS: KCRM PBTS PREL UN UNSC IMO XA XW SO FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEWS ON SOMALIA AND PIRACY

REF: STATE 18101

Classified By: CDA Josiah Rosenblatt, 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The French MFA is generally favorable to the notion of UNSC action on Somalia and piracy (reftel). However, the French would hope that a UNSC mandate would contain specifics setting forth clearly the legal basis of any resulting operation and the responsibilities of, and limitations placed on, participating countries. The French would prefer that a UN program not hamper the operation the French initiated last November to protect WFP vessels from pirates, a program which Denmark is now undertaking, with the Dutch scheduled to replace Denmark at the beginning of May ¶2008. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) We delivered on February 25 reftel demarche on Somalia and its piracy problem to MFA DAS-equivalent Helene Le Gal and Somalia desk officer Thierry Caboche. Responding on February 29, Caboche said that France supported UNSC engagement on the issue. He noted that France had already demonstrated an active interest in this subject, referring to the naval escort and protection France had provided on a bilateral basis to World Food Program (WFP) ships bound for Somalia during the November 2007-January 2008 period. Caboche said that Denmark had taken over this escort duty from France at the end of January 2008 but that the Danes' rotation would end at the beginning of May 2008. Caboche said that the Dutch had indicated that they would undertake the mission once Denmark's tenure ended. Caboche said that France had taken care to provide the Danes, and would later provide the Dutch, the rules of engagement and other operational guidelines the French had developed, in order to ensure a smooth transition among the participants.

¶3. (C) After noting that the Security Council had discussed this issue informally on February 28, Caboche noted two French concerns about a UNSC resolution. First, he emphasized the importance of clearly drafting the resolution in terms of rules of engagement, the mission's objectives and its limitations, and the operation's legal basis. "It shouldn't be a blank check to allow participants to act at will," he said. He noted especially the need for provisions on how to handle pirates who may be detained as a result of anti-piracy operations.

¶4. (C) Caboche's second concern involved the possible negative impact UN involvement could have on the WFP support operation the French, Danes, and Dutch were conducting. He indicated that even if a separate UN operation were developed, France would continue to support the WFP operation it had initiated. He said that France would hope that its WFP support activities would not be subsumed within a broader UN program. Caboche also said that the GOF would not want to

see its program fall victim to any maneuvering on the part of Russia, China, and South Africa, all three of which, he believed, could object to the proposed UNSC role described in reftel.

¶5. (U) Minimize considered.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:  
[http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.c fm](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm)

ROSENBLATT